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ABSTRACT

This annual report states the goal of the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, which is to provide assistance to those who are vocationally disabled so they can secure and maintain suitable employment. The Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Alaska Department of Education offers an overview of fiscal year 1989 activities, focusing on service delivery for rural areas, grants to local nonprofit organizations, the Small Business Enterprise Program, performance standards for counselors, and assistive technology services. A list of specific 1989 accomplishments is provided. Regional reports are then presented from the north central, southeastern, Anchorage-Spenard, and Anchorage-Bragaw offices. Specific types of services are also described, including independent living services and disability determination services. Several graphs depict statistics concerning the vocational rehabilitation services provided. In addition, two clients and three counselors selected to join the Circle of Excellence are profiled. (JDD)

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Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

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Annual Report

Fiscal Year 1989

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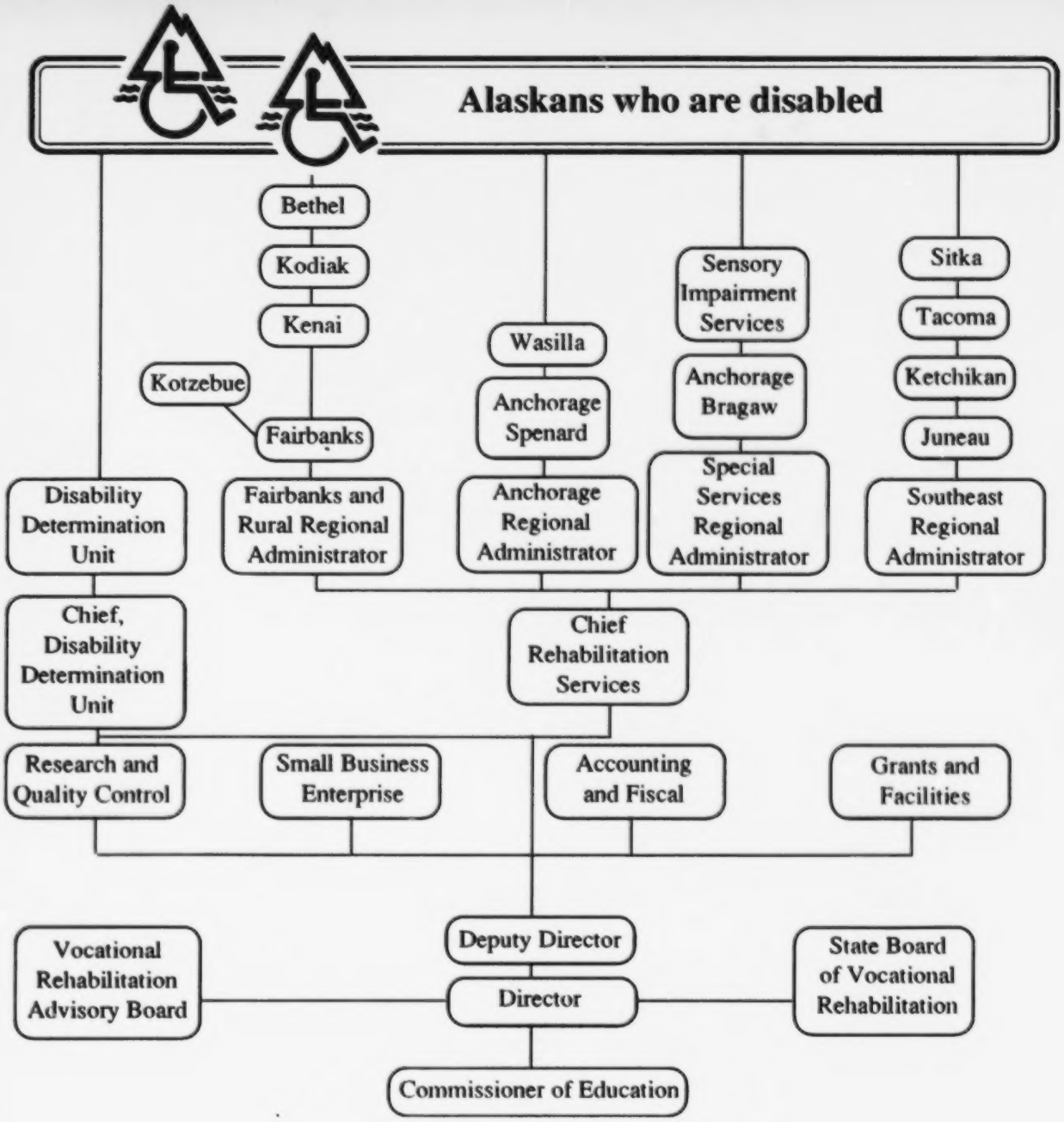

Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

A support system to help disabled Alaskans become fully employed citizens

Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

A Division of the Alaska Department of Education

P. O. Box F

Juneau, Alaska 99811

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GOVERNOR

William G. Demmert
COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

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Vocational Rehabilitation Eligibility and VR Services

The goal of the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is to provide assistance to those who are vocationally disabled so they can secure and maintain suitable employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation eligibility considers two criteria:

* There must be a physical or mental disability which results in a substantial handicap to employment; and

* There must be a reasonable expectation that vocational rehabilitation services will lead to employment.

A wide variety of services is available to assist our clients in securing and maintaining suitable employment. Only those services needed by the client to successfully complete a rehabilitation program will be provided:

* **Professional Counseling** in adjustment to disability, vocational exploration, and planning for re-entry into the world of work.

* **Evaluation** to determine vocational strengths and weaknesses. Such individual evaluation is used to plan for services and employment alternatives.

* **Medical Assistance** can be provided if it is needed to secure employment. Surgeries and hospitalization, mental health, physical and occupational therapy, prosthesis and orthotics may also be available.

* **Training** for those individuals who will need a career change because of disability. Such training can involve study in colleges, trade schools, on-the-job training, vocational-technical schools, etc.

* **Tools and Licenses** can be provided if they are needed to enter a specific trade or profession.

* **Job Development and Placement** is a speciality service in which the client and the Vocational Rehabilitation counselor work together in job location and employment. Placement in a suitable job is the goal of the vocational rehabilitation program.

* **Follow-Along Services** can be extremely important to ensure that job placement is successful. Such follow-along can solve job problems that may occur.

Vocational Rehabilitation can provide other goods and services if they are needed to achieve the goal of employment. Such other services might be transportation, maintenance, and a referral program to other appropriate private or public agencies for their special services.

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Vocational Rehabilitation in Alaska

Keith Anderson, Director

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Alaska Department of Education
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During Fiscal Year 1989 the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has moved to consolidate gains made during the previous year. We have worked closely with various organizations to improve the quality and quantity of services available to disabled residents of rural Alaska. As part of this effort, we are beginning a demonstration project in the Kodiak area that should significantly improve employment opportunities not only for the residents who experience a handicap but all of those desiring employment.

We are exploring several different methods of service delivery for rural areas and are gathering the information necessary to determine which methods are most effective and efficient. Our commitment to provide quality services to rural residents still remains strong.

The Division continues to provide grants to local non-profit organizations in an effort to develop community resources for those who experience disabilities. During this fiscal year we have provided more than $2.3 million to develop, demonstrate and enhance services to individuals who are developmentally disabled, long term mentally ill, traumatically brain injured, blind and visually impaired, and deaf.

We have worked hard this year to make sure all funds are expended in the most productive way possible. In many cases, grant funds have given way to fee-for-service as a means of payment, and those organizations who continue to receive grants are more accountable for what is purchased with those funds.

The Small Business Enterprise Program has been completely overhauled in an effort to make it more beneficial to a greater number of blind and severely disabled Alaskans. We expect that this important program will expand significantly over the next few years and that it will provide employment opportunities to many residents of the state who meet the eligibility requirements.

With the implementation of performance standards for counselors we have seen a decided increase in production within the Division, as reflected by an eight percent increase in the number of disabled Alaskans served from the prior fiscal year.

As a component of our performance standards system, we have developed and implemented a Circle of Excellence program to recognize and reward counselors who perform their duties in an outstanding manner. Three counselors from around the state were recognized in 1989: Russell Cusack and Arve' Solomon from the Anchorage-Spenard Branch Office, and John Osborne from the Kenai Branch Office. We hope to expand the program to make all employees of the Division eligible during next fiscal year.

During the past year, the Division applied for a grant to provide for assistive technology services to disabled Alaskans. Although we were not successful in obtaining those funds, we expect to receive a grant during the 1990 federal fiscal year.

We have developed a mechanism for receiving from the Social Security Administration reimbursement for services provided to clients who were receiving Social Security disability payments during their rehabilitation

program. This money will be used to enhance the quality and level of services provided to all clients.

It has been a good year! The Division continues to be an integral part of the entire community of groups and individuals providing services to Alaskans who experience handicapping conditions. We express our appreciation to the legislature, the governor, our clients, consumer advocacy groups, service providers, vendors and employers.

But more importantly, I express my personal appreciation to all those in the Division—central office staff, regional administrators, counselors, and support staff—who have worked so hard to make some of our dreams become reality.

Accomplishments - 1989

We believe the following presentation of our statistical performance for Fiscal Year 1989 will provide you with a clearer understanding of how many people we served, and furnish you with a deeper knowledge of the vocational rehabilitation process.

1,955 We began Fiscal Year 1989 with these **open cases.** Many of these people were in training programs or physical or mental restoration programs that transcend fiscal years.

1,825 These people represent the number of **new cases** that were opened during the fiscal year as a result of the Division's referral activities.

3,778 This number represents the true number of people who received rehabilitation services during Fiscal Year 1988.

1,211 When dealing with any population group there are those individuals who will decide not to participate, will move to different locations or die. These people represent those who did not finish the program.

467 These people represent successful closures during the fiscal year —those people rehabilitated into employment.

- ✔ The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation served **3,778** clients and rehabilitated **467** with **2,118** still receiving services at the close of the year.
- ✔ We provided services to **1,188** and rehabilitated **233** severely disabled individuals.
- ✔ From entrance to our program through rehabilitation, program participants increased their incomes by **347 percent.**
- ✔ From program entrance to rehabilitation, severely disabled persons increased their incomes by **284 percent.**
- ✔ For Public Assistance recipients who were rehabilitated, such payments decreased by **58 percent.**

North Central Region

Stuart Davies, Administrator

North Central Regional Office

Administrator:
Stuart Davies

Fairbanks Branch Office
Regional Office Building
675 7th Avenue, Station B
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-4587

Counselors:
Roger Kempfer
Larry Hintz
Derrill Johnson
Cheryl Walsh

Support Staff:
Donna Towler
Denise Hollingsworth
Lynn Whited
Christine Underwood

Kenai Branch Office
11355 Spur Highway
Benco Building, Room 208
Kenai, Alaska 99611-7755

Counselors:
John Osborne
Marian Greiner

Support Staff:
Edi Macik
Lori Holleman

The North Central Region of DVR is the largest geographic unit in the state, with offices in Fairbanks, Kenai, Kodiak, Bethel and Kotzebue. Presently 17 employees and one student intern provide a thorough range of vocational rehabilitation services to clients in urban, rural and remote areas of the region.

During the past year the region's offices have provided independent living, supported employment, and general program services through a well defined system that includes employee training, distribution of branch offices throughout the region, and networking of professional resources.

Networking includes coordination of services with the Alaska Native VR programs in Dillingham and Kodiak. Staff members have developed strong community and business relationships to assist clients in achieving greater independence through achieving their vocational goals.

North Central is a region of great diversity. A wide variety of client situations constantly tests the ingenuity of counselor teams. Regional staff represent nearly 100 years of combined vocational rehabilitation experience.

A number of events over the past year will improve and set the stage for continued improvements in client services in the years to come. Particularly notable is this office's cooperative effort with the Fairbanks North Star School District to establish a systematic approach to helping students make the transition from school to work.

A "transition team" composed of professionals from the district, DVR, Fairbanks Resource Agency, Developmental Disabilities, Private Industry Council, and Adult Learning Programs of Alaska meets monthly during the school year to discuss approaches to enhance the transition effort. One of a number of activities undertaken by this group was a "JOBS" decal designed to recognize local businesses who provide employment opportunities for our mutual clients.

Supported employment services have expanded during the past year to serve the chronically mentally ill and the traumatically brain injured. Local mental health facilities have been asked to become partners in the supported employment effort. Their input is vital in seeking solutions to the vocational problems faced by individuals with these difficulties.

During FY '89 grants to serve individuals who are chronically mentally ill and traumatically brain injured were awarded to Fairbanks Resource Center, Frontier Training Center, Kodiak Island Mental Health Center, Adult Learning Programs of Alaska, and Access Alaska. An issue to be resolved in the future is identifying sources of long term support for clients not eligible for funding from Developmental Disabilities nor the Community Support Program.

Beginning in FY '90 the supported employment project will transition from a grant process of serving clients to a client/counselor/facility process which will involve the general DVR counselor more so than in the past. From an administrative standpoint, supported employment becomes an equal partner with the general program and gives the counselor an essential,

expanded service which could be offered to clients as appropriate.

In past years vocational evaluators from the Anchorage-Bragaw Office traveled to school districts statewide providing prevocational evaluations for special education students to assist their teachers in developing appropriate curriculum and transition planning. Due to funding constraints, the division no longer provides that service throughout the state. Last year, however, a traveling evaluator came to Fairbanks monthly and was able to test a limited number of people—approximately 36. School district referrals were given priority for the available slots. Evaluations will continue to be provided in Fairbanks during FY '90.

A nine-minute videotape produced by office staff and Northern Sights, Inc., has proved to be particularly helpful in explaining the program to persons interested in vocational rehabilitation services.

A senior vocational rehabilitation counselor from the Kodiak Branch Office was transferred to the Anchorage-Bragaw Office to assume a veterans caseload. His casework will be assumed by a vocational rehabilitation assistant, and Kenai office staff will continue to serve the Alaska Vocational Technical Center in Seward, Seward residents, North Kenai, Kenai, and Soldotna. Kenai counselor John Osborne was named a member of the Circle of Excellence based upon his outstanding job performance in past years.

Other areas served in this region are Delta Junction and Nenana, the North Slope communities of Barrow and Prudhoe Bay, the Interior villages of Venetie and Galena, and the urban communities of Fairbanks and North Pole.

Providing quality rural services will be the major challenge of this region in months to come. This will include maintenance of a well-trained staff, expansion of independent living and supported employment programs to these areas, continued cooperative efforts with the Native vocational rehabilitation grantees, and innovative program development working within budgetary constraints.

People Rehabilitated	People Served or in Process
151	1,022

Kodiak Branch Office
P. O. Box 3389
Kodiak, Alaska 99615-3389

Rehabilitation Assistant:
Georgia Quaccia

Kotzebue Branch Office
P. O. Box 129
Kotzebue, Alaska

Rehabilitation Assistant:
Marie Saterlee

Bethel Branch Office
P.O. Box 1507
Bethel, Alaska 99559-1507

Counselor:
Norman Hogg

Support Staff:
Nastasia Nick

Southeastern Region

Southeastern Region

Administrator:
Mike Birdsall

Juneau Branch Office
Airport Office Center, Suite 102
9085 Glacier Highway
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Counselors:
Lee Hagmeire
Sue Roth

Rehabilitation Assistants:
Melissa Taylor
Carol Peterson

Support Staff:
Melody LaPierre
Leona Andersen

Ketchikan Branch Office

Counselor:
John Schell

Support Staff:
Clara Ness

Mike Birdsall, Administrator

Fiscal year 1989 presented many challenges to staff. One of those challenges was assignment of supported employment services to field staff. Supported employment provides services to allow severely disabled persons to access training and employment opportunities.

Individuals who experience mental retardation and chronic mental illness, and who have traditionally not succeeded in other training and employment opportunities, made great strides toward gaining meaningful employment through this program, thanks to strong cooperative efforts among DVR and Southeast facilities that provided supported employment opportunities under a job coaching model.

In another significant challenge and accomplishment, the region met goals established by the division for numbers of persons with disabilities served in a given period of time.

Once people are referred to DVR offices, a certain number are determined eligible to receive services. Individualized Written Rehabilitation Plans are implemented to accomplish employment goals, and the final achievement of employment is realized.

The Southeast region faces special challenges in serving individuals who are disabled. It is significantly rural, culturally and economically diverse, and lacking in many needed resources for the disabled. We are proud to have exceeded division goals for both number of clients served and quality of services provided.

The region underwent a formal DVR Administrative Case Review in October 1988. Client case files were reviewed to determine the quality of services provided to clients and the decision-making prowess of staff. Vendors, employers and facilities staff who work with the region were interviewed as well.

I am pleased to report that the region achieved a "high acceptable to outstanding" rating. This means that Southeast residents with disabilities can expect a high level of professional counseling services, delivered by a professional and competent staff.

These achievements are particularly commendable in that one counselor experienced a major illness, a new counselor came on staff to replace one who retired, and the Sitka Branch completed its first year as a new office.

A major effort was made this past year to provide vocational rehabilitation opportunities to rural residents. The number of people referred for vocational rehabilitation services increased, directly as a result of counselors traveling to rural locations to meet with community leaders, health care providers, educators, and others. The efforts took place in Haines, Skagway, Hoonah, Angoon, Petersburg, Wrangell, Prince of Wales Island and Thorne Bay.

Southeastern Region goals for Fiscal Year 1990 will include efforts to:

- increase outreach to rural areas
- develop interagency agreements with appropriate state and community

agencies and organizations to serve people with disabilities

- ✦ increase services to people with chemical dependency disabilities
- ✦ develop innovative rural employment opportunities
- ✦ expand counselor training in serving people with traumatic brain injury and in computer usage for visually impaired clients
- ✦ implement a proposed exchange with the Soviet Union through the Alaska-Siberia Project sponsored by the Foundation for Social Inventions

Sitka Branch Office
Harborview Center
700 Katlian, Suite F
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Counselor:
Ede Hayes

Support Staff:
Edna Samual

Tacoma Branch Office
1502 Tacoma Avenue South
Tacoma, Washington 98402-1815

Counselor:
Carl Hale

Support Staff:
Camille Denney

People Rehabilitated	People Served or in Process
74	625

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Anchorage - Spenard Office

Kurt Thorsen, Administrator

Anchorage Spenard Office
4100 Spenard Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99517-2999

Administrator:
Kurt Thorsen

Counselors:
Mike Shiffer
Jean Henderson
Barbara Allen
Willie Watson
Arve' Solomon
A. Rose-Scott
Charles Cary
Russ Cusack

Support Staff:
Terry Cummings
Carla Kracker
Sharon Wilson
Gladys Graf
Doris Hufford
Eileen Craig
Roxanne Bills
Fay Harrison
Cheryl Westley
Patty Lindsey

It was a productive year for DVR in Southcentral Alaska. There were significant increases in the number of clients served under individual vocational rehabilitation plans and the number who achieved employment with the help of the Division.

This improvement was the result of the counselors' efforts and an apparent increase in entry level employment opportunities in both the private and public sector. The economy appears to have improved in Southcentral in part due to the mini-boom caused by the Exxon oil spill disaster. Employment opportunities may not be so readily available this winter when the oil spill cleanup work has ceased.

Two counselors, Russ Cusack and Arve' Solomon, distinguished themselves as members of the Circle of Excellence by meeting the criteria for outstanding performance during FY '89. Their combined efforts enabled 55 people with disabilities to obtain employment.

A focus of the Spenard Branch Office has been to provide vocational rehabilitation services to disabled students from Anchorage School District. To improve the delivery of services and increase referrals of that population, four vocational rehabilitation counselors (an increase by two) were assigned in August, 1988 to work with the school district. As a result, school district referrals to DVR have increased, with a corresponding increase in the number of disabled students being served.

Referrals have been primarily learning disabled or mentally retarded students from the special education program. We would like to increase referrals from the general school population as well. We believe this can be accomplished by vocational rehabilitation counselors working more closely with high school counselors and school nurses. People in these positions will be able to assist vocational rehabilitation counselors in identifying students who are disabled, thereby giving the students the opportunity to apply for DVR services.

Vocational rehabilitation counselors also will participate in inservice training programs for high school personnel, bringing to their attention vocational rehabilitation services and other information regarding DVR. We expect that these efforts will result in the continued expansion of vocational rehabilitation services to disabled students in the Anchorage School District.

The DVR Wasilla Branch Office has also emphasized services to school district disabled students. The Mat-Su School District created a liaison position, partially funded by DVR, to work closely with the DVR Wasilla Branch Office. We expect that the liaison position will greatly enhance efforts to transition disabled students from the school setting to competitive employment.

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Fiscal year 1990 is not without its challenges for DVR in South Central Alaska. Funding for the Division has remained static over recent years while the cost of case services purchased from the private sector has steadily increased. The costs of medical diagnostics and medical restoration services have risen significantly, taking a larger portion from the DVR budget. It has been necessary to limit these services through policy changes and identifying other resources for the services. This makes the delivery of these services to DVR clients more complex and time consuming, which places more demand on DVR counselors and administrators.

The cost of training services in Southcentral Alaska has increased as well. The University of Alaska - Anchorage (UAA) has increased tuition and other enrollment fees. The merger of UAA and Anchorage Community College has resulted in a reduction of short term vocational training programs through the university system. Private schools are available as an alternative but at a much greater cost for comparable training.

Another alternative would be on-the-job training, which requires a good deal of counselor time and involvement in setting up the training as well as monitoring it. However, it is an effective way to help clients become employed, and the costs are usually less than for more formal training.

It would seem that to serve DVR clients as well in fiscal year 1990 as we have in previous years, DVR staff will have to emphasize "hands on" kinds of services such as on-the-job training and guidance, counseling and placement. DVR counselors will also have to put more effort into finding resources outside the Division to cover the cost of case services for their clients.

The Division's Southcentral staff is in a situation common to that of most other state agencies: they must make do with less. I believe that this can be accomplished in that we have a hard working, resourceful staff. We are looking forward to another good year at the Anchorage Spenard and Wasilla Branch offices.

Wasilla Branch Office
1075 Check Street. Suite 101
Wasilla, Alaska 99687

Counselors:
Rob Turner
Dianne Swanson

Support Staff:
Patricia Barbachano
Katherine Grandorff

People Rehabilitated	People Served or in Process
205	1,706

Anchorage - Bragaw Office

Stan Ridgeway, Administrator

Anchorage Bragaw Office
3600 Bragaw
Anchorage, Alaska 99508-4637

Administrator:
Stan Ridgeway

Counselors:
Ira Rosnel
Joyce Palmer
Duane Mayes
Macrina Fazio-O'Brien
Thea Floerchinger

Evaluators:
John Frey
Pat Johnsen
Madge Niwa

Rehabilitation Assistant:
Dolly Walter

Support Staff:
Bev Norris
Elsie Burton
Stephanie Raleigh
Barbara Folmar
Barbara Johnson

The Anchorage-Bragaw Office, formerly the Evaluation Center, made significant strides this year in serving persons who experience disabilities. An expanded counseling team enables us to provide special case counselors for deaf, blind, chemically dependent and disabled veteran clients.

In an effort to broaden our vocational evaluation services, our two evaluation projects are now one. This consolidation will allow us to partially decentralize the evaluation center by relocating evaluators to regional offices during fiscal year 1990. The counseling team has been expanded to three, with a new counselor for the hearing impaired scheduled to be hired within the first quarter of FY '90.

As a regional administrator, it is my responsibility to insure that counselors, evaluators and support staff provide the highest quality appropriate rehabilitation services to our clients. With emphasis on staff development and training, I feel our staff will accomplish this task.

The consolidation of our core and special education evaluation projects will allow us to move evaluators to regional offices during the next 12 months. With the purchase of specialized testing equipment we now travel to the Northern and Southeast regions to provide itinerant vocational evaluation services to urban and rural clients. This decentralization will enhance the division's overall goal of becoming more community-based.

The major challenge facing the Anchorage-Bragaw Branch Office for Fiscal Year 1990 will be implementing an agreement with the Louise Rude Center for the blind and deaf to oversee day-to-day operation of the Small Business Enterprise Program.

People Rehabilitated	People Served or in Process
37	404

Independent Living Services

Kathe Matrone, Coordinator

Independent Living Services
4100 Spenard Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99517-2999

Coordinator:
Kathe Matrone

Counselor:
Gale Sinnot-Lane

Support Staff:
Rose Foster
Mary Ann Dygas

Independent Living Plans	Individuals Receiving Information & Referral Services
50	400

Independent Living Rehabilitation Services assist persons with severe disabilities to function more independently within the family and community. The goal of independent living rehabilitation is to enable a person with a severe disability to gain control over his/her life, and, choosing from available options, minimize reliance on others in making decisions and in performing everyday activities.

Traditionally, the vocational rehabilitation agency has been restricted to providing services to those individuals with disabilities who have an employment handicap and who have a reasonable expectation of obtaining employment. That restriction resulted in denial of rehabilitation services to some individuals with severe disabilities because rehabilitation professionals and individuals were unable to determine feasible employment objectives.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation now is committed to providing comprehensive services to all individuals with disabilities who need services leading to employment or independent living.

Two kinds of services are available through the independent living program in Alaska. The Part A case service program provides direct services through the independent living counselor on a statewide basis. This counselor works with approximately 70 persons with severe disabilities to enable them to live independently. Eleven of the individuals have since been referred to the general program for services leading to employment.

Independent Living Centers (Part B program) provide such services as: information and referral, public information and education, networking and outreach, personal care attendant training, education and independent living skills training, individual advocacy, disability benefits counseling, equipment loan service, recreation services, personal care referral service, and coordination of housing modification services.

Currently there are two Part B centers in Alaska - Access Alaska in Anchorage and Fairbanks, and an independent living program operated by Homer Mental Health Services.

In FY '89 Access Alaska completed a comprehensive needs survey in Southeast Alaska, showing the need to develop a new independent living program in Juneau. A program was to be started in Juneau in fall 1989, offering information and referrals, individual advocacy services, personal attendant care training, benefits counseling, and public information and education.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation supports independent living services through grants and technical assistance. In FY '89 Independent Living Plans were developed for approximately 50 individuals with severe disabilities, helping them to live as independently as possible. Approximately 400 individuals received services through the statewide information and referral services provided by Access Alaska.

The Independent Living Council was to meet in fall 1989 to plan completion of the five year plan for independent living services in the state. In FY '90 the program will seek additional funding from a variety of resources. It is important to enable Alaskans to live independently in their own communities.

Disability Determination Services

Disability Determination Service
4100 Spenard Road, Suite A
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Chief:
Ken Hardy

Adjudicators:
Robert Bennett
Alice Vaudrin
Sandra Kelley
Robert Keck
Eugene Heck
Joan Katulski
Micaela Jones

Hearing Officer:
Paul Markstrom

Support Staff:
Charlotte Hughes
Irene Jemison
Allan Gillis
Patsy A. Kidd
Phyllis Thomas
Thomas Porth
Susan Trivette
Carmen Hatcher
Margaret Goff

Ken Hardy, Chief

The Disability Determination Unit makes determinations statewide as to whether a claimant medically qualifies for benefits under Social Security Disability (Title II) or Supplemental Security Income Disability (Title XVI) benefits. Those two programs are 100 percent federally funded, with applicants applying for benefits at their local Social Security offices or contact stations.

Those claimants who are insured for SSA Disability and/or who meet the income and resources requirements for SSI purposes have their claims forwarded to the DDU for disability decisions based on their medical, vocational and educational histories, and their age.

During FY '89 the DDU processed approximately 3,300 claims to final decisions. About 40 percent of the claimants received disability benefits.

The Disability Determination Unit is becoming more involved every year in word- and data-processing, enabling us to handle more claims efficiently. Eventually each employee will have a personal computer that will tie into the National SSA system. That system will provide programs to enhance the adjudication of claims and the transfer of claims electronically between different components of SSA.

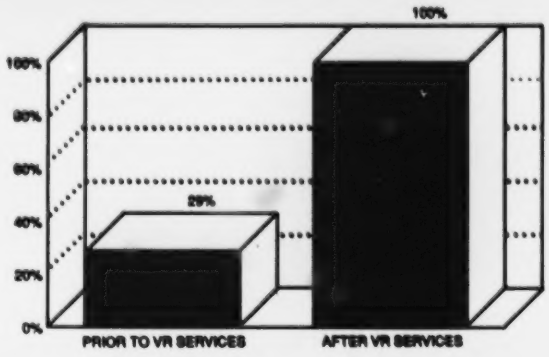
Disability claims that meet certain criteria are referred to DVR to be considered for rehabilitation services. Federal law also permits the exchange of information such as medical or vocational data, between the DDU and DVR without going through a formal release process. This facilitates services between the two offices.

With SSA reducing staff by 17 percent at the federal level and 12 percent at the DDU levels over the past three years, our job has certainly been challenging. Our challenge has been to make quality decisions in a timely manner so as to provide quality service to the disabled citizens of Alaska over years to come. The biggest challenge is doing more work with fewer people and dollars.

Following are figures for December 1987, the latest figures available, showing dollar amounts paid to disabled Alaskans by the SSA and SSI programs:

SSA (TITLE II)	
Disabled workers	$1,277,000
Spouses	$28,000
Children	$153,000
SSI (TITLE XVI)	
Disabled	$652,007
Blind	$19,101

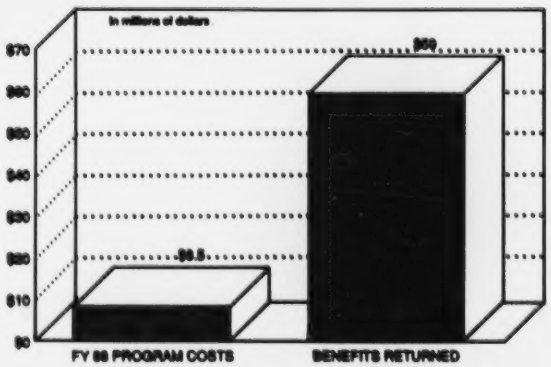
Percent of rehabilitated clients gainfully employed



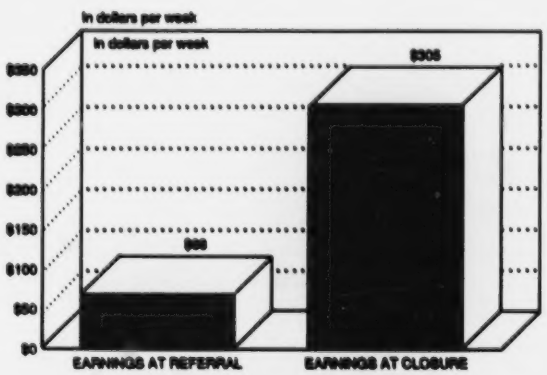
Benefits returned to society by clients rehabilitated

compared with

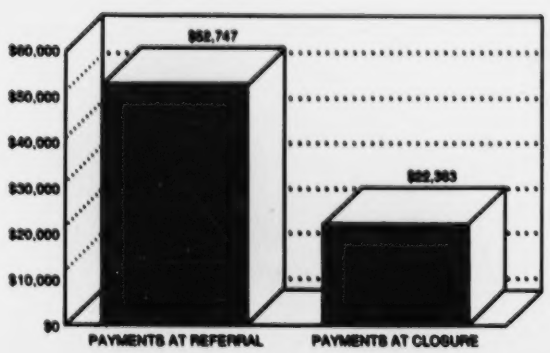
FY89 program costs



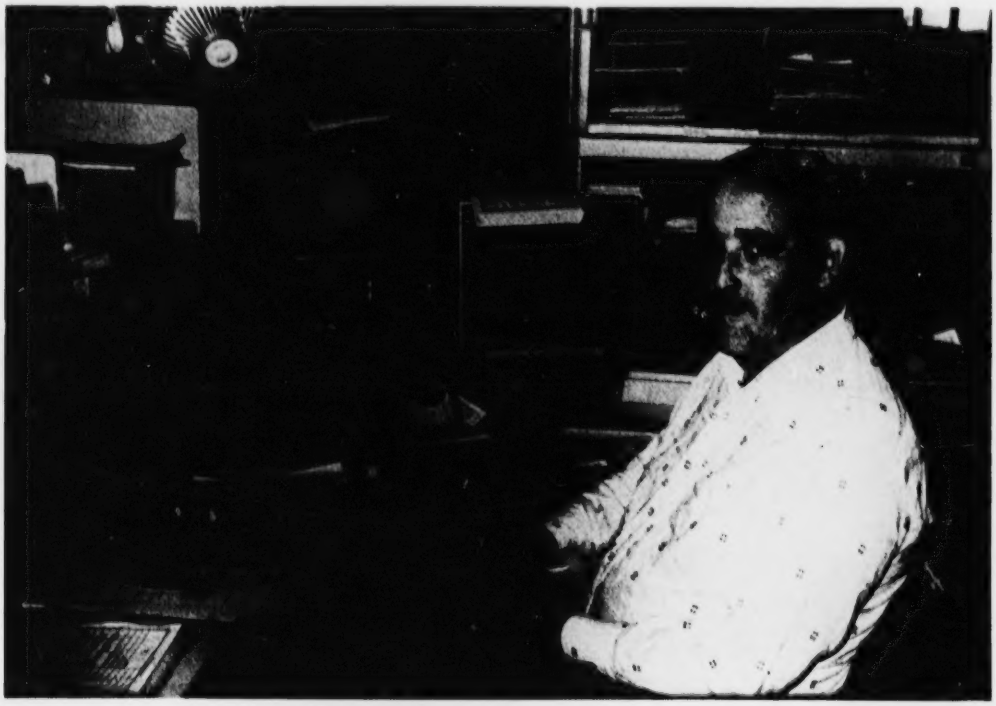
Rehabilitated client weekly earnings at referral and closure



Total monthly public assistance payments to rehabilitated clients



Client Profiles



Terry Clark

Though he was plagued by back problems for years, Terry Clark tried his best to "live with it." Winter was always the toughest, and he paid a painful price for bending, stooping and heavy lifting.

As a laborer and baggage handler Terry could see the writing on the wall—his days were limited. He was diagnosed as having *ankylosing spondylitis*, an inflammatory joint disease that affects the joints and ligaments of the spine. It would be necessary to change from a physically demanding job to a very light duty or sedentary job.

Terry is not a complainer, nor is he overly talkative—until you break through the ice. Terry liked math and he was interested in computers. A thorough vocational evaluation indicated that Terry not only had a strong interest in math and computers but also the aptitude to learn a new career.

Various training options were explored and, given Terry's need to return to employment as soon as possible, a six month "accelerated-computerized bookkeeping" course at Alaska Computer Institute was chosen. Terry applied for and received a federal Pell grant to offset his basic living needs as husband, father and home owner. Terry completed his courses with excellent grades and was immediately hired for two short-term jobs setting up and writing programs.

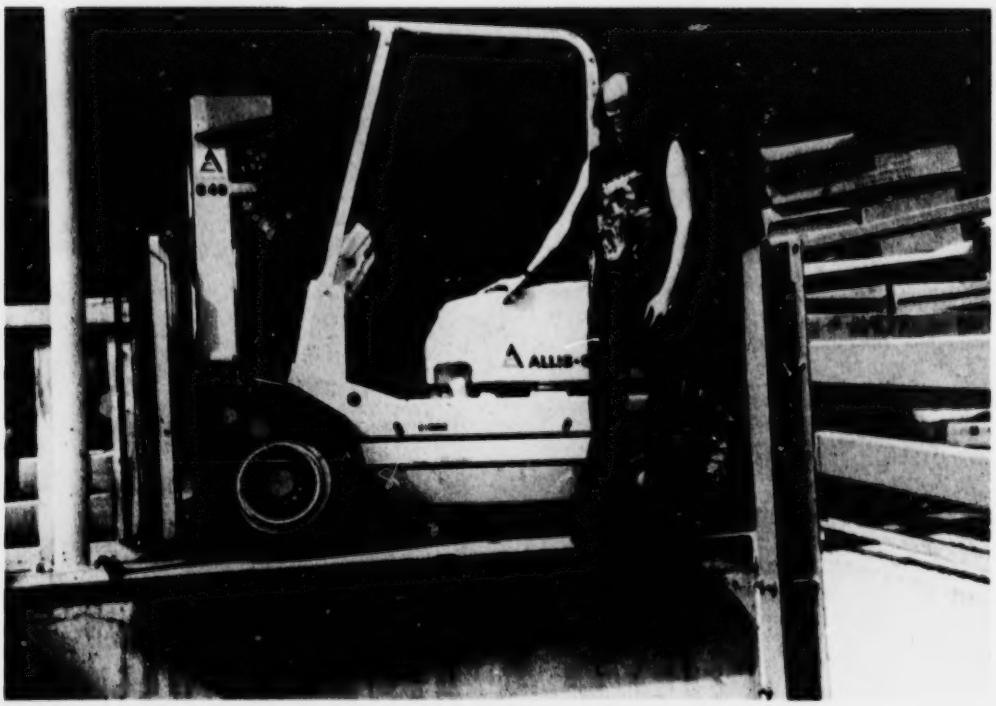
Although he gained valuable experience, he lacked a retirement plan and, more importantly for Terry, medical insurance that would provide ongoing health coverage. Through selective job placement, Terry was interviewed and was subsequently hired as an accounting technician, a GS-level 6 permanent full-time job with the federal government.

With Terry's training and initiative, he "hit the deck running," and he hasn't slowed down since. His only accommodation is a "stiff backed" old military issue chair that his employer gladly provided. DVR provided tinted prescription glasses to cut the glare of the computer screen.

Terry's job is highly complex and demands accuracy. Vocational Rehabilitation services have enabled him to meet those demands and have given him the skills to advance in his career and continue working proudly and productively.

Profile by Jean Henderson

Mike Brady



Mike Brady has come a long way. He has been working since November 1988 as a warehouse supply clerk at Friend of the Sea Army Air Force Exchange Services on Elmendorf Airforce Base in Anchorage. After three months of successful employment, he received an increase in pay that enabled him to reduce his dependence on public assistance.

Diagnosed with the disability of atypical psychosis in 1985, Mike has experienced auditory hallucinations and confusion of his thought process. The symptoms associated with Mike's disability have made it difficult to relate with peers, teachers, and employers. He quit high school at age 16 and drifted from one job to another, lasting three to four months at each. Mike says, in assessing his disability, "I guess I just don't get along very well".

Recurring hospitalization at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute and in psychiatric in-patient programs at community hospitals were necessary, as Mike was believed to be a danger to himself if he were left untreated. Mike was fortunate in being accepted for service thorough Anchorage Community Mental Health's Transitional Living Center, a residential program for people who experience severe psychiatric disabilities.

Although the Transitional Living Center provided housing, medical management, counseling, and recreational services, one component—employment services—was missing. But not for long. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Anchorage Community Mental Health developed a cooperative funding plan to provide vocational rehabilitative services to residents at the center. Mike was able to get help through this program.

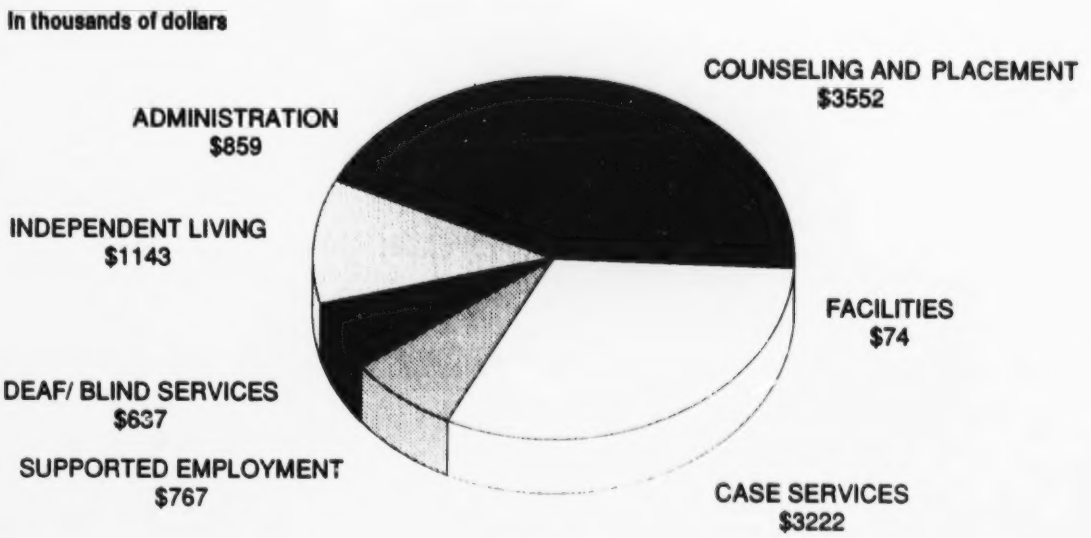
The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Anchorage Community Mental Health have assisted Mike with work adjustment training and vocational placement assistance. Staff from Anchorage Community Mental Health will continue to provide Mike with counseling and guidance services as long as he is employed. He will always need this form of help to manage his psychiatric symptoms.

Working together, the Division's supported employment program and Anchorage Community Mental Health have helped Mike broaden his outlook on life. He is now successfully employed, and, as he says, "I like that I have a future."

Profile by Russell Cusack

Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

FY89 Expenditures



Circle of Excellence

Three DVR counselors were selected during FY88 to join the Circle of Excellence, a program initiated this year to recognize counselors who have made outstanding contributions to the division and its clients.

John Osborne

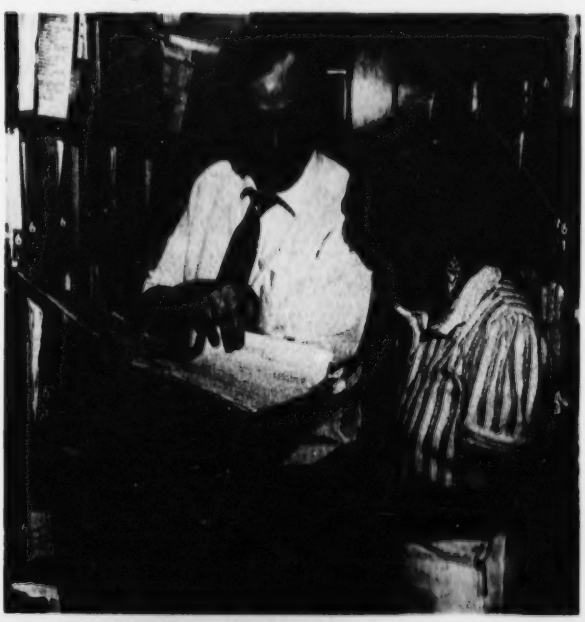
John Osborne, right, in the above photo, was invited into the circle because of his "consistent, committed performance" over the past seven years, "combined with an ability to meet changing needs of the state, the community and clients." From the Kenai office, Osborne represents the division in nearly half the geographical area of the state..

Russell Cusack

Russell Cusack, from the Anchorage Spenard Branch, has served the division in three different locations during the past seven years. Shown at right with a client, he was recognized for his "great competence, combined with a high energy level" that have helped him manage a caseload of nearly 100 clients. He also was praised for his efforts in establishment of the Supported Employment Program.

Arve' Solomon

His own varied work experience has helped Arve' Solomon, from the Anchorage Spenard Office, left in the above photo, to guide many clients to the the right jobs during his 15 years in vocational rehabilitation. In Anchorage over the last seven years he has helped more than 200 clients become employed and has often helped his clients far beyond the call of duty. Arve' was recently named Member of the Year by the Anchorage Personnel Association.



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